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TRANSLATION OF POETRY

Abstract: This paper deals with the main difficulties the translator faces while translating poetry (such as transfer of rhythm, rhyme, and of the whole impression of the poem), and suggests certain ways to overcome each of them. However, it is also important to mention that because of the fact that every epoch, every nation, and every culture solve the problems of translating poetry in their own way, it is still impossible to establish firm standards of poetic translation. Many linguists have tried to find solutions, which could be used in many cases of poetry translation. Description is given of some strategies to translate poetry as poetic translation has always been and will be considered as subjective, and each case has to be considered individually. The article also discusses such approaches to the translation of poetry as independent and subordinate, and the translator always has to choose, which one to follow.

Keywords: poetic translation, rhyme, verse, rhythm, blank verse, free-verse, stanza, poetry.

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ПЕРЕВОД ПОЭЗИИ

Аннотация: В данной статье рассмотрены главные сложности, с которыми сталкивается переводчик при переводе поэзии (например,

передача ритма, рифмы, или же цельного впечатления от стихотворения), а также предполагаемые способы решения каждой из них. Однако также необходимо упомянуть, что в связи с тем, что каждая эпоха, каждый народ и каждая культура решает проблемы перевода поэзии по-своему, к единым стандартам поэтического перевода прийти не удастся и по сей день. Многие лингвисты пытались найти какие-либо решения, которые могли бы использоваться при переводе поэзии. В статье описываются определенные стратегии поэтического перевода, но поскольку поэтический перевод всегда рассматривался, и будет рассматриваться как субъективный, каждый случай нужно рассматривать отдельно. В статье также рассказывается о таких подходах к переводу поэзии, как независимый и подчиненный, а переводчик всегда вынужден выбирать, какому из них следовать.

Ключевые слова: поэтический перевод, рифма, размер, ритм, белый стих, свободный стих, строфа, поэзия.

Poetic translation has existed for many centuries. But there have always been different opinions, various principles, and translation techniques too.

Poetic translation is one of the most effective ways to render the contents of a poem into another language. As a rule, the essential elements of the poems are rhyme, rhythm and verse (depending on the type of the poem). If the original contains them, the translator should try to convey all these components of the verse. However, it is still a controversial question whether it is necessary to retain all of them.

There are two approaches to the translation of poetry: independent and subordinate. The aim of the independent approach is to convey the mood and the beauty of the verse, with no attention to the form of the original. The main task of this approach is to make the reader feel emotions contained in the poem and convey the form of the piece of poetry with great accuracy. This translation technique involves not only preservation of the verse, stanza, and metrics of the poem, but also the order and type of the rhymes, especially its melodies and sounds.

It is worth mentioning that the poem can sometimes be translated in prose. This is the easiest way of translating, as it allows to keep both

aesthetical and informational components of the original. It can mostly be used for translation of songs, or when the idea of the author is so important that the form of its expression is not that relevant.

Poems can also be translated using blank verse. In this case the translator tries to retrain only the original verse without saving rhymes. Nevertheless, this technique requires that the translator should possess certain poetical skills.

In fact, poetic translation implies a creation of a poetic text corresponding to the original in meaning, form and its poetic properties, which uses all the elements typical for a poetic work, including rhyme, if any [1]. This type can be considered the most complicated form of literary translation of the text, as it requires that the translator should have not only talent for literature and ability to write poetry, but also the ability to accommodate the original meaning, idea and even literary techniques in the poetic form of another language.

The greatest challenge of the poetic translation is transferring the structure of the poetic text, which requires use of rhymes and a certain verse. It is the poetic structure that brings so many difficulties when creating a perfect «reflection» of the original in another language. The fact is that the language of translation and cultural references may differ significantly from those contained in the source language, both in style and language constructions, and that sets the task for the translator to change the author's ideas and images so as to adapt them to the form of the target language [3].

When a translator works on poems, first of all, they have to decide whether the poetic verse and structure of the rhymes correspond to the original. If the translator decides to change the structure of the verse, it is necessary to determine which structure to prefer, while it is necessary to take into account the semantic content of the poem, that is, the external form should be close to the implications contained therein.

The main difficulty in poetic translation is to combine the original meaning with the necessary form, and it should be mentioned that exact and literal translation in this case is very rare. The main emphasis should be placed on the transfer of the main idea and the mood of the original.

One of the most difficult issues in translation theory and practice is to recreate the rhythm of the original [2]. Translation theorists insist on the transfer of rhythm in the translation, as rhythm represents the intonational essence of poetic phrases.

Some linguists argue that the correct transfer of rhythmic features in most cases is impossible, since the nature of the source and the target languages is different, so most translators have to transfer only the general rhythm, and the intonation of the original with fairly free deviations from its meter.

Besides, one of the most difficult problems to solve in poetic translation is the problem of rhyme. V.V. Nabokov, in the article «The Art of Translation», describes this problem as: ««Mg-no-vain-yay» has over two thousand Jack-in-the-box rhymes popping out at the slightest pressure, whereas I cannot think of one to «moment»» [6]. The translator even can keep the same type of rhyme as in the original poem, but this raises another problem because different types of rhymes are perceived quite differently by native and non-native speakers.

It is known, for example, that one of the reasons, which caused the English-speaking readers' misunderstanding of the I. Brodsky's poems translated by the author, was his desire to keep the exact rhyme, which is common in Russian poems, but rare in English [4]. The English readers associated such poems either with the poetry of the 19th century, or with comics and poetry for children. However, some languages contain no rhyme in poetry at all. An example is modern poetry in English. In this case, you do not need to create a rhyme in the translation.

On the other hand, it is important to think about the author's style. The difficulty is that for the successful transfer of the author's style account should be taken not only of phonetic features (alliteration, assonance, onomatopoeia, etc.), or of the so-called «music of verse», but also of the characteristic features of the era, national and social identity. In particular, I. Kashkin insists on preserving the image system through a reasonable interpretation of the author's will to achieve maximum proximity to the original work [5]. So, the emphasis is on the fact that the translator should possess deep knowledge of general culture, as well as of the main works of the particular poet/poetess and their significance for the culture as a whole. The main requirement here is the need to preserve aesthetic completeness and visual means of the original [7].

To sum up, it can be concluded that the complexity of poetic translation is mainly due to the specifics of the poetic text, in which the figurative basis and form are directly related to the culture and to the peculiarities of the language structure. We all know Umberto Eco's quotation that translation is the art of failure. The question is whether it is preferable to sacrifice elements of content or elements of form for its sake.

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